

## **A message from the Dean**

Dear Participants and Guests,

We are delighted that over 350 of our students have the opportunity to enhance their undergraduate experience by participating in our distinctive annual URCAD event, which highlights the culmination of work that has led to the outstanding student research, creative endeavors and student performances you will see today. URCAD is just one way in which we recognize excellence in our students as well as the mentorship and encouragement that has inspired them to be their best.

URCAD is a celebration of the work of our students, showcasing their accomplishments through poster presentations, oral presentations, exhibits, and performances. UMBC encourages students of all disciplines to engage in mentored projects and through creative thought and focused inquiry, to discover in themselves their passion. This path of discovery is an integral part of our students' opportunity to enhance their learning by contributing knowledge to their area of study and developing meaningful relationships with faculty, professional experts, and their peers.

Supporting these students' applied learning experiences is central to our mission at UMBC as it develops critical thinking skills, the ability to communicate effectively, and the ability to analyze information in a meaningful way. These are the skills our students will take forward as leaders of the future. URCAD is an opportunity each year to acknowledge great work, and encourage our students whose passions, skills and abilities inspire us every day.

Albert Einstein said, "the important thing is not to stop questioning." Our students do just that, and their success is due in no small part to their enthusiastic questioning. It is also due to the tremendous effort and guidance provided by their mentors and across campus, and by our faculty and staff who support and engage our students. Please accept my thanks to all of you who work with these outstanding students and help them reach their goals.

I welcome you and encourage you to enjoy the enlightenment you will receive today listening to and learning from these remarkable students.

Welcome to URCAD, and enjoy the day,

Katharine H. Cole, Ph.D.

Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs